



MARYKNOLL OFFICE FOR GLOBAL CONCERNS

Peace, Social Justice and Integrity of Creation

www.maryknollogc.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 23, 2020

Contact: Kathleen Kollman Birch, Communications Manager
(202) 832-1780, Email: kathleen@maryknollogc.org

Mercy is the Way Through the Pandemic

WASHINGTON, DC — President Donald Trump sent a late-night tweet on April 20 saying that he would be “signing an Executive Order to temporarily suspend immigration.” This news caught many people by surprise, including, reportedly, the president’s staff and leadership of the Department of Homeland Security.

“The evils of racism and xenophobia do not stop during a pandemic,” said Susan Gunn, director of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns. “To suspend immigration is inhumane and will split up families seeking safety.”

On April 22, President Trump signed an executive order entitled “Proclamation Suspending Entry of Immigrants Who Present Risk to the U.S. Labor Market During the Economic Recovery Following the COVID-19 Outbreak,” effective today, April 23rd, 2020. The executive order will be in effect for at least 60 days and will be reviewed 50 days from the effective date to determine necessity to be continued or modified.

In spite of its name, this executive order will do little to help the United States economy recover from the pandemic. Immigrants contribute greatly to the U.S. economy. Rather than take jobs from U.S. citizens, they create new jobs by forming new businesses, spending their incomes on U.S. goods and services, paying taxes, and raising the productivity of U.S. businesses.

“The facts are that immigrants are good for the economy, especially during this pandemic,” Gunn said. Some 25 percent of doctors and 70 percent of farmworkers are immigrants, and we need more, not fewer, of these and other essential workers during the novel coronavirus pandemic.

As we said before, when the Trump administration enacted the “zero-tolerance” immigration policies, placed in context, these policies illustrate the next steps the United States has taken down an already dark path – a path clouded by fear and distorted ideologies that violate our core values and further diminish the United States’ role as a world leader.

The same day as the president’s tweet, Pope Francis tweeted, “The Christian response to the storms of life and history can only be mercy: compassionate love among us and toward everyone, especially toward those who suffer, who have more difficulties, and are abandoned.”

The Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns (MOGC) represents Maryknoll missionaries, who are Catholic men and women serving in impoverished communities around the world. The MOGC provides analysis and advocacy on issues of justice, peace and the integrity of creation that affect the countries and communities where Maryknoll missionaries serve.

###

Maryknoll Sisters • Maryknoll Fathers & Brothers • Maryknoll Lay Missioners

200 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001
(202)832-1780 phone
(202)832-5195 fax
ogc@maryknoll.org

P.O. Box 311
Maryknoll, N.Y. 10545
(914)941-7575 phone
(914)923-0733 fax

777 First Avenue, 10th fl.
New York, N.Y. 10115
(212)973-9551 phone